

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS21737

This bill would add three new district judge positions with resident chambers in Canyon, Ada, and Jefferson counties, beginning October 1, 2013. The last new district judge position in Canyon County was added in 2006, and the last one before that in 1996. The population of Canyon County has increased by 12% since 2006 and by 60% since 1996. The last new district judge position in Ada County was created in 2007, and the last one before that in 1998. The population of Ada County has increased by 8% since 2007 and by 41% since 1998. The district judge position in Jefferson County would be the first such position chambered in that county. No new district judge positions have been added in the Seventh Judicial District since 1993. Since then the population of Jefferson County has increased by 49%, and the population of neighboring Bonneville County has increased by 35%. The judiciary has been able to keep pace with the corresponding growth in court calendars by the use of senior judges and by having active judges assigned to cases in districts other than their own when required. Drug and mental health courts operating in these districts have provided a cost-effective means of avoiding expensive incarceration costs while protecting the community. Their operation has been possible only because judges have been willing to devote time beyond normal working hours to preside over these courts. Dealing with Idaho's growing population and caseload and continuing to expand the capacity of drug and mental health courts requires these additional judicial resources.

FISCAL NOTE

The annual salary and benefits for the district judge positions and other costs, including salary and benefits for court reporters, would total approximately \$673,200 in general funds. However, since the starting date for these positions would be October 1, 2013, the cost for FY 2014 would be \$504,900.

Contact:

Patricia Tobias, Administrative Director of the Courts
(208) 334-2246